ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR THE CONVERSION OF A PORTION OF GENESEE VALLEY PARK UNDER THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND ACT AS A RESULT OF THE BROOKS LANDING REVITALIZATION PROJECT

Appendix M: Summary of Public Involvement

- 1. Democrat and Chronicle article, dated 8/12/02
- 2. Democrat and Chronicle article, dated 2/7/03
- 3. Democrat and Chronicle article, dated 11/16/03
- 4. Summary of Sector 4 CDC & 19th Ward Meetings regarding Brooks Landing
- 5. Summary of Public Meetings regarding Brooks Landing
- Summary of Public Hearing and Reviews regarding Brooks Landing
- 7. Letter, dated 2/24/03, from the Landmark Society of Western New York
- 8. Letter, dated 11/13/03, from the Landmark Society of Western New York
- 9. Remarks on Behalf of the University of Rochester, regarding Brooks Landing, dated 2/24/03
- Email from Frances Gotcsik regarding Brooks Landing
- 11. Letter to City Council, from Genesee Corridor Business Association, dated 4/8/03
- 12. Brooks Landing Public Informational Meeting, 2/6/03, Summary of Public Comments and Questions
- 13. Sign-In Sheet, Brooks Landing Public Informational Meeting, 2/6/03
- 14. City Planning Commission Minutes, 2/24/03
- 15. Good News For Genesee Street Newsletter, dated 3/03, Genesee Corridor Business Association
- 16. City of Rochester Mailing List, Brooks Landing Revitalization Project
- 17. 19th Ward Community Association Mailing List, Brooks Landing Revitalization Project
- 18. 2-18-04 Letter from Sector 4 Community Development Corporation
- 19. 4-14-04 Letter from Sector 4 Community Development Corporation

River plan promoted at Brooks, Genesee

By Rick Armon Democrat and Chronicle

(August 12, 2002) — To jump-start the redevelopment of the Brooks Avenue and Genesee Street intersection, city officials may designate the site as an urban renewal district and create a public promenade and boat landing along the Genesee River nearby.

"Development occurs when the city is taking a strong position and moving forward," Councilman Wade Norwood said.

The Brooks Landing project -- which has been talked about for more than 16 years -- would put a 100-room hotel, shops and restaurants in the area across the river from the University of Rochester. It also would include the public promenade.

"We see it as an imperative part of the economic development of the area," John Borek, president of the 19th Ward Community Association, said about the overall project.

Brooks Landing is a significant project because that area has been so underdeveloped and belies the economic capability of the neighborhood, he said.

City Council is considering two pieces of legislation related to Brooks Landing -- the urban renewal district designation and hiring Bergmann Associates for \$150,000 to design the promenade and boat landing. Council's Housing and Community Development Committee is expected to discuss the legislation at its meeting at 6 p.m. Thursday at City Hall.

Under state law, municipalities can create urban renewal districts in blighted areas and then acquire land for economic development projects. The land acquired by the city can be sold to a company for less than the market price.

The Brooks Landing district would be comprised of nine acres near the intersection of Brooks and Genesee, and along South Plymouth Avenue and the Genesee River. That property now includes a mix of deteriorating commercial buildings, residences, parking lots and parkland.

"The urban renewal designation shows that we're taking a stronger posture," Norwood said. "Instead of trying to encourage development, we're taking a role of ensuring development."

If the designation is approved, a formal plan would be developed, according to legislation submitted by Mayor William A. Johnson Jr. Fashun Ku, the city's commissioner of economic development, said the city would like to begin constructing and complete the promenade and boat landing next year. The cost is estimated at \$1 million.

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JR might arise by '04 00-room hotel near

BY STAFF WRITER

JOHN KOHLSTRAND

A developer hopes to open a Rochester in time for the spring five-story, 100-room hotel and restaurant across the Genesee River from the University of > 2004 graduation.

pen if all goes according to schedule, which means land acoverall Brooks Landing redevel-opment project should begin by quisition and road work for the City officials say that can hapthis summer.

ic meeting at St. Monica Church, city representatives deredevelop the intersection of Thursday night during a pubtailed a public-private effort to **Brooks** Avenue and Genesee Street.

They envision a Genesee riverfront promenade and a boat anding as part of the project.

The hotel, to be developed by Christenson Corp., would sit to UR. It would be a mixture of near a pedestrian bridge that now connects the neighborhood extended-stay suites and tradi-

A second developer, Fraum ional short-term rooms.

Management, wants to build a building nearby with a mix of oftwo-story, 20,000-square-foot fice and retail

our door who want to set up "We have people knocking on shop," said Rick Rynski, senior economic development special ist for the city of Rochester.

Residents peppered the city with concerns, including questions about traffic.

Still, residents leaving the meeting expressed satisfaction that change may soon be coming in the aging, working-class neighborhood, The Brooks anding project has been talked about for more than 16 years.

who watched the presentation with his wife, Barbara. They the dirt," said Kent Starbird, "I'd like to see the shovel his own a tax service in the neigh porhood.

For too long, said longtime resident John Donoghue, the neighborhood has been stuck in neutral. Attract "the influence of he UR kids and it will enhance the neighborhood," he said.

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\$17.2 million riverside development on horizon

Lara Becker Liu Staff Writer, Democrat & Chronicle

(November 16, 2003) — In a corner of Fashun Ku's office sits a pile of faux gold-plated shovels that the city's economic development commissioner is just itching to use — not for just any ground-breaking, but one that has been in the works for about 20 years.

If all goes as planned, Ku could get his chance any week now: Construction of the long-awaited Brooks Landing project is said to be starting soon.

Located at the southeast corner of Brooks Avenue and Genesee Street on the Genesee River, the project's key elements include an 80-room, extended-stay hotel; a 4,900-square-foot restaurant; a public boardwalk and boat docking facilities; and about 20,000 to 25,000 square feet of commercial and office space.

A separate construction phase, at the northwest corner of the Brooks-Genesee intersection, will include the renovation of a vacant drugstore into a coffee shop; the razing of the building next door to make room for a parking lot and outdoor seating area; and the development of up to 5,000 square feet of office and retail space on a pair of vacant lots farther down on Genesee.

The project, estimated to cost \$17.2 million, will be paid for with a combination of private and public funds — the latter including \$3.2 million in city bonds, a \$1.5 million investment from the Rochester Economic Development Corp. and a \$500,000 federal grant. Construction is expected to be completed in three phases over the next year and a half.

Stakeholders are anxiously awaiting the project because it is seen as crucial for the revitalization of a part of southwest Rochester that includes the 19th Ward, a once-thriving neighborhood now in decline, and central also in the city's plans to develop one of its major waterways.

Residents, business owners, the city and the University of Rochester community across the river expect Brooks Landing to become a retail destination, a link to UR and an impetus for change in the city's southwest section.

"This will have spillover effect," Ku said. "This won't just affect here. This will affect Brooks Avenue and north on Genesee Street. There's tremendous potential there."

Until now, though, mere potential hasn't been enough to bring Brooks Landing to fruition. Lack of interest from developers and commercial tenants has stalled the project again and again.

Even today, Brooks Landing seems to be at the mercy of outside forces. The latest pitfall stems from a complication over a 1.4-acre parcel of land on which the parking lot of the hotel, and portions of the restaurant and hotel itself, would sit.

The parcel is technically considered part of Genesee Valley Park — though it is not physically connected to the park, boasts no park amenities and includes four lanes of South Plymouth Avenue where it curves along the river past Brooks Avenue. Before construction can begin, the city has to go through a federal park alienation process.

It has already received permission from the state Legislature and the governor to make the park land into part of the development, but the federal government in these cases designates the state Department of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation to make a recommendation. And officials there have been slow to sign off on the deal, despite an offer from the city to add 19.5 acres to Turning Point Park in exchange for the 1.4 acres. A spokeswoman for the department did not comment for this story.

"That's the challenge — that one little piece. That's the only stumbling block," said Dana Miller, chairman of the Sector 4 Community Development Corp., which will be involved in developing the coffee shop on Genesee. "Or I should say, that's the next stumbling block. When I cut a ribbon on it, then I can say there's no more stumbling blocks."

Since state officials paid a visit to the site in October, Ku, for one, has grown optimistic that approval is forthcoming. A ground-breaking could follow within weeks, he said, possibly before the year is out.

Others are a bit more cautious.

"There have been so many false starts," said Miller, who has been involved in Brooks Landing since its genesis two decades ago. The neighbors, he said, "will believe it when they see it."

History of long wait

Rochester has been waiting for Brooks Landing — or something like it — since 1983, when the city's South River Corridor Plan was conceived.

The plan called for \$110 million worth of development, including 500 to 600 housing units, retail businesses on Genesee Street and the closing of Wilson Boulevard. With the exception of a 14-unit housing development on the river's west bank, though, most of the private investment never materialized.

In fact, Miller, past president of the 19th Ward Community Association and a member of the committee that reviewed the river corridor plan, contends that news of the project actually spurred the demise of the area.

"When word got out that the project was coming, people sat back and said, 'Great, this project will come, and someone will come and buy my property.' And they just stopped investing in their properties," he said.

Meanwhile, a \$2.8 million pedestrian bridge built in 1991 to connect the university campus on the east side of the Genesee River to South Plymouth Avenue on the west side wasn't doing much to draw students to the 19th Ward.

Without the promised economic development, there simply wasn't enough to attract them. "It was a bridge to nowhere," Miller said.

In 1995, city officials attempted to revive the development by sending out a request for proposals. They got only one, from Christa Construction Inc., which announced plans in 1996 to build two retail complexes on the east side of Genesee Street near Brooks Avenue. The \$3.7 million project was to include six or eight stores on the ground floor and 24 apartments for students on the second floor.

It never happened.

The banks that would have financed the deal wanted Christa to lease between 50 percent and 75 percent of the 16,000 square feet of retail space before they would provide financing, and the developer could not sign up enough tenants.

After Christa withdrew, another developer, the Pittsford-based Cabot Group, stepped in. But Cabot's plans, which apparently involved attracting a major chain restaurant to the site, also fell through.

Finally, with so many years gone by, and so many disappointments racked up, city officials and 19th Ward residents decided to re-examine the project to figure out why it hadn't taken off.

"A few of us got together and we said, 'You've got a great neighborhood on one side, with solid citizens, and another great neighborhood on the other side of the river. Why is it that this project isn't going anywhere?" Miller said. "And the conclusion we reached was that it really wasn't a riverfront development. It was a Genesee Street development. And in order to make it work, you really had to bring it all together. You (had) to open up the land between the river and Genesee Street."

Finding new appeal

That brainstorm, hatched about four years ago, inspired the Brooks Landing project, as it is known today.

According to Ku, city officials and 19th Ward residents jointly came up with a new plan that called for expanding the development and making it contiguous with the river — much as Schoen Place of Pittsford sits flush against the canal, "with no street separating it," said Ku.

Suddenly, the ill-fated Brooks Landing had new appeal as a riverfront development featuring a hotel, restaurant, and office-and-retail complex.

Adding strength to the project was an agreement by the University of Rochester, which had earlier committed to providing some kind of financial assistance for Brooks Landing, to instead become an anchor tenant in the office complex.

"That seemed as important as anything else the university could contribute," said UR spokesman Robert Kraus.

Indeed, the university's commitment gave Flaum Management Co. Inc., which had been courted by city officials to help bring the project together, the boost it needed to attract additional tenants.

"We leveraged a bunch of our relationships and were able to pull a hotel server in, a restaurant operator in, and the University of Rochester for the office component," said Michael Palumbo, chief operating officer for Flaum Management.

At roughly the same time, the city established a relationship with a Minneapolis-based hotel developer, who learned of the project indirectly from the 19th Ward Association's vice president: During a trip to Minneapolis, she happened to mention Brooks Landing to an architect connected to the developer, Ron Christenson of Christenson Corp.

Christenson, after viewing a videotape of the area and flying out for a visit, eventually took on the hotel and restaurant pieces of the Brooks Landing project.

Though Christenson had not previously done work in Rochester, Ku said the developer was brought on board on the strength of his projects in Minneapolis — which includes 1 million square feet of commercial development — and his ability to secure financing: \$1.65 million in private investment; a \$4.8 million bank loan and \$1.5 million from the Rochester Economic Development Corp. REDCO's investment, said Ku, represented "the turning point" for the project because it significantly lessened the developer's burden in securing equity in the distressed, post-Sept. 11 capital market.

Christenson also has landed a hotel operator, Intercontinental Hotels Group, which will put a Staybridge Suites by Holiday Inn at the site. The developer is currently trying to find a restaurant operator, who would invest \$1.25 million in the project. Officials, including Ku, have been reluctant to reveal the contenders.

Public gets involved

While the city labored at selling the project to developers and tenants, some 19th Ward residents worked to sell the project to the community at large.

The Sector 4 CDC organized a "design charrette," the architectural term for a brainstorming session, for about 160 people, who gathered in the basement of the Genesee Baptist Church in March 2000. Afterward, the city commissioned Bergmann Associates to produce a detailed plan based on the charrette suggestions, "and we took

that model everywhere," Miller said, "to try to answer questions."

Most of the questions concerned plans to build part of Brooks Landing on a portion of South Plymouth Avenue, thereby cutting it off from through traffic (although, technically, the hotel parking lot will remain a public-access throughway, with an entrance on Genesee Street and another on Brooks Avenue).

While traffic concerns have persisted somewhat, Sector 4 CDC officials said the project has mostly been met with enthusiastic support.

"It's a true community project," said Sector 4 CDC director John Borek.

"This wasn't something that was imposed on the community by a nameless, faceless planner. This was our design. It's a window (onto the neighborhood). We want to be proud. And if you look at that corner, there's nothing to be proud of."

Eyesores still rampant

Despite the efforts of a few business owners to remodel their storefront facades — using matching grant money from the city — the Brooks-Genesee intersection looks like a bombed-out nexus of abandoned buildings and vacant lots. From that vantage point, Borek said, "you'd never know that a middle-class community lies behind it."

The storefront at the northwest corner, formerly a Carr Drugs, has been empty at least 10 years, according to Ku. Yellowing newspapers have been wadded into its windows to obscure the view inside. Across the street, a run-down apartment building is slowly being emptied of tenants who have been relocated in anticipation of Brooks Landing. (The building will be torn down.)

One of the tenants, 50-year-old Willie Jones, said last week — as he tied a mattress to the hood of his car — that he would come back to visit Brooks Landing "if I live to see it."

Dave Etzel, owner of Jim Dalberth Sporting Goods at 926 Genesee St. and the president of the Genesee Corridor Business Association, said the project "will be good for business."

"I think there's a built-up need for it," said Etzel, who will have to relocate his business of 47 years to make way for Brooks Landing.

"I think the neighborhood has been hoping it would get started, and the business people have been anticipating this for so long. In this part of the block, most of the businesses have closed up anticipating this to happen."

But with the project seemingly so close at hand, hope along Brooks and Genesee is lifting. Public safety in the area has improved, said Borek, as storefronts have been fixed up, unsightly buildings torn down and new housing developments built north on Genesee

Street.

"It's definitely not one of my problem areas," said Lorri Strem, acting captain of the Rochester Police Department's Genesee Section.

The Sector 4 CDC is busy planning its coffee shop, which will be located in the former Carr drugstore. The group hopes to attract those coveted UR students and faculty — about 2,300 of whom live in the neighborhood, according to Borek.

The CDC also is selling "bricks for Brooks Landing," for \$100 each, to raise money for its efforts. The engraved bricks likely will be made into a wall to be placed inside the coffee shop, though group members haven't formally decided that yet.

And the city continues to hand out matching grants of up to \$25,000 for façade improvements. D&L Groceries Inc. and the Millennium Mini Mart are among those businesses that have taken advantage of the offer, through which the city pays 90 percent of renovation costs.

All that's left to do, it seems, is wait. "We've been following this from week to week and month to month," said UR's Kraus. "A lot more is possible for that area after the Brooks Landing project actually starts. We're very eager to see ground broken."

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Summary of Sector 4 Common Council and 19^{th} Ward Meetings regarding Brooks Landing

Date: 4PM on March 7, 2001
 Location: Sector 4 CDC office
 89 Genesee Street (former St Mary's Hospital)

AGENDA

- Project partners
- Parkland alienation
- Feasibility
- Issues
- 2. Date: 4PM on April 11, 2001 Location: Sector 4 CDC office

AGENDA

- University of Rochester role
- Parkland alienation process
- Development program
- 3. Date: 4PM on May 10, 2001 Location: Sector 4 CDC office

AGENDA

- Developer role
- Parkland alienation process
- Development program
- 4. Date: 4PM on June 7, 2001 Location: Sector 4 CDC office

- Project site
- Parkland alienation process
- Development program

5. Date: 4PM on July 12, 2001 Location: Sector 4 CDC office

AGENDA

- Funding
- Project site
- Parkland alienation process
- 6. Date: 4PM on August 16, 2001 Location: Sector 4 CDC office

AGENDA

- Public waterfront
- Development program
- Parkland alienation process
- 7. Date: 4PM on September 13, 2001 Location: Sector 4 CDC office

AGENDA

- Public waterfront
- Development program
- Parkland alienation process
- 8. Date: 4PM on October 10, 2001 Location: Sector 4 CDC office

AGENDA

- Public waterfront
- Development program
- Parkland alienation process
- Land assembly
- Timeline / schedule
- 9. Date: 4PM on November 15, 2001 Location: Sector 4 CDC office

- Public waterfront
- Development program
- Parkland alienation process
- Land assembly
- Timeline / schedule
- Developer role

10. Date: 4PM on December 13, 2001 Location: Sector 4 CDC office

AGENDA

- Public waterfront
- Development program
- Parkland alienation process
- Land assembly
- Timeline / schedule
- Developer role
- 11. Date: 4PM on January 24, 2002 Location: Sector 4 CDC office

AGENDA

- Public waterfront
- Development program
- Parkland alienation process
- Land assembly
- Developer role
- 12. Date: 4PM on March 7, 2002 Location: Sector 4 CDC office

AGENDA

- Public waterfront
- Development program
- Parkland alienation process
- Land assembly
- Developer role
- 13. Date: 4PM on April 25, 2002 Location: Sector 4 CDC office

- Public waterfront
- Development program
- Parkland alienation process
- Land assembly
- Developer role

14. Date: 4PM on May 9, 2002 Location: City Hall Room 008A

AGENDA

- Public waterfront
- Development program
- Parkland alienation process
- Land assembly
- Developer role
- 15. Date: 4PM on June 20, 2002 Location: City Hall Room 008A

AGENDA

- Public waterfront
- Development program
- Parkland alienation process
- Land Assembly
- 16. Date: 4PM on August 29, 2002 Location: City Hall Room 008A

AGENDA

- Urban Renewal District
- Parkland alienation process
- Public waterfront
- Development program
- 17. Date: 4PM on October 24, 2002 Location: City Hall Room 008A

- Urban Renewal District
- Parkland alienation process
- Public waterfront
- Development program

18. Date: 3PM on December 20, 2002 Location: City Hall Room 008A

AGENDA

- Urban Renewal District
- Parkland alienation process
- Public waterfront
- Development program
- Funding
- 19. Date: 4PM on January 30, 2003 Location: City Hall Room 008A

AGENDA

- Urban Renewal District
- Parkland alienation process
- Public waterfront
- Development program
- Funding
- 20. Date: 4PM on May 1, 2003 Location: City Hall Room 008A

AGENDA

- Urban Renewal District
- Parkland alienation process
- Public waterfront
- Development program
- Funding
- 21. Date: 4PM on July 25, 2003 Location: City Hall Room 008A

- Parkland alienation process
- Public waterfront
- Development program
- Public improvements

Summary of Public Meetings

1. Genesee Street Visioning Workshop

This public meeting was held on Saturday, March 31, 2001 at 8:00 am, at St. Monica's Church located at 841 Genesee Street. The agenda included discussions of the following topics:

- A vision for the neighborhood
- Issues
- Opportunities
- Brooks/Genesee Initiative
- Genesee Street corridor

The workshop was attended by over 75 citizens. After a general presentation of the topics, citizens were distributed into multiple break-out groups to address specific issues, opportunities and a vision associated with the revitalization of the neighborhood. Results of the break-out discussions were then presented to the whole group.

2. Brooks Landing Public Meeting I

This public meeting was held on Thursday, January 17, 2002 at 7:00 pm, at the Genesee Baptist Church located at 149 Brooks Avenue. Approximately 60 citizens attended. The agenda included discussions of the following topics:

- Brooks Landing project concept proposal
- Parkland discontinuance within Genesee Valley Park
- Street modification/improvements and associated traffic changes
- Potential impacts and mitigation of project

This meeting was the first of two community-wide meetings that addressed specific proposed components. Public concerns included existing traffic flow issues, how the project proposal would hurt or help existing traffic issues, pedestrian safety and access to the waterfront, impacts to mature trees, and private sector financial commitments to the project.

3. Brooks Landing Urban Renewal Informational Meeting I

This meeting was held on November 4, 2002 at 7:00 pm, at the James Madison School of Excellence - Auditorium located at 200 Genesee St. The meeting was attended by approximately 15 property owners and tenants within the Brooks Landing project area. The agenda included discussions of the following topics:

Brooks Landing Revitalization Project background & overview

- The Urban Renewal planning process
- Proposed land assembly for project Sub-Areas I, II & III

General questions about the project and the urban renewal process were addressed. Business owners were advised that the City would work with them to stay in the neighborhood.

4. Brooks Landing Public Meeting II

This community-wide meeting was held on Thursday, February 6, 2003, at 6:00 pm, at St. Monica's Church located at 841 Genesee Street. Approximately 110 citizens attended. The agenda included discussions of the following topics:

- Brooks Landing project concept proposal
- Parkland discontinuance within Genesee Valley Park
- Street modification/improvements and associated traffic changes
- Potential impacts and mitigation of project
- Upcoming regulatory processes associated with the project

This was the second community-wide meeting intended to address specific proposed project components and to get additional public input as part of the environmental assessment under SEQR. Questions raised by the public were similar to those in the first meeting held on January 17, 2002. Additional questions were related to the duration of construction for the project, the University of Rochester's role and projected job creation associated with the project.

5. Brooks Landing Revitalization Project - Presentation to the Landmark Society of Western New York

This presentation was held on Wednesday, February 19, 2003 at noon at the Landmark Society's office located at 133 South Fitzhugh Street. The presentation was requested by the Landmark Society and gave the Board of Trustees an opportunity to review and comment on the project proposal. Subsequently, a letter from the Landmark Society of Western New York dated February 24, 2003 was sent to the City. The letter stated the Landmark Society of Western New York's support for the project.

6. Brooks Landing Revitalization Project - Meeting with the Executive Director of the Friends of the Genesee Valley Greenway

This meeting was held on Thursday, March 27, 2003 at City Hall Room 010A located at 30 Church Street. The meeting included a presentation of the Brooks Landing Revitalization Project at the request of Frances Gotcsik - Executive Director of the Friends of the Genesee Valley Greenway. After the presentation, the meeting included discussions of potential impacts and mitigation measures associated with the Genesee

Valley Canal. Frances Gotcsik recognized that the former canal at this location had been significantly disturbed as a result of the installation of Monroe County Pure Waters 60" forcemain sewer and an adjacent gravity sewer running the entire length of the proposed project site within the canal bed. Ms. Gotcsik expressed a preference to sustain public ownership of the canal corridor and to lease it for a parking lot to the developer as part of the proposed project.

7. Brooks Landing Urban Renewal Informational Meeting II

This meeting was held on April 2, 2003 at 7:00 pm, at the James Madison School of Excellence - Auditorium located at 200 Genesee St. The meeting was attended by approximately 10 property owners and tenants within the Brooks Landing project area. The agenda included discussions of the following topics:

- Brooks Landing Revitalization Project update
- The Urban Renewal planning process update
- Process steps and regulatory procedures for land assembly

Property owners and tenants asked questions about property acquisition time lines and relocation procedures.

Public Hearings and Reviews

In addition to informational meetings and workshops offered to the community, regular meetings with neighborhood leaders and meetings with public agencies, multiple public hearings and review meetings were held in compliance with various City regulatory processes. Public hearings were given the appropriate public notice in local newspapers as required for each item.

1. City Planning Commission Public Hearing

Date:

February 24, 2003

Location:

City Hall Council Chambers

AGENDA

- Urban Renewal Plan
- Changing Zoning Classification
- Zoning Text Amendments

2. Rochester Environmental Commission

Date:

February 24, 2003

Location:

City Hall Room 124B

AGENDA

• Review meeting for environmental assessment under SEQR

3. Site Plan Project Review Committee

Date:

March 4, 2003

Location:

City Hall Room 008A

AGENDA

• Review of Sub-Area I site plan

4. City Council Public Hearing

Date:

April 8, 2003

Location:

City Hall Council Chambers

- Acquisition by negotiation or condemnation (Eminent Domain Procedure Law)
- Urban Renewal Plan
- Changing Zoning Classification
- Zoning Text Amendment
- Changes in pavement widths



February 24, 2003

Ms. Patsy Robertson Rochester Environmental Commission c/o Art Ientilucci, Director of Zoning 30 Church Street, Room 122-B City Hall Rochester, NY 14614

Dear Ms. Robertson,

This letter is to inform the Environmental Commission that the Landmark Society has reviewed the development proposed for Brooks Landing, with our Preservation Issues Committee given a thorough presentation on the project by Rick Rynski and Larry Stid.

The conclusion of the Landmark Society is that the project will not have any adverse impact on the historic portions of Genesee Valley Park, and that elements of the projects such as the rehabilitation of buildings along Genesee Street could have a positive benefit for our city's historic resources.

Consequently, the Landmark Society does not envision any historic preservation concerns as this project moves forward. It is our understanding that decisions are still being made about the site plan for parking for the hotel/restaurant and for the future of traffic along Plymouth Avenue and Genesee Street.

As the proposed hotel, docking facility, river walk and rehabilitation along Genesee Street will produce positive benefits for the surrounding neighborhood and for the entire city; the city and private entities involved in this project have our best wishes and support.

Sincerely,

Executive Director

cc: Fashun Ku



November 13, 2003

Mr. Fashun Ku Director of Economic Development City of Rochester 30 Church Street, Room 5A Rochester, NY 14614

Dear Fashun,

As you have requested, I am writing to review the Landmark Society's position on the city's Brooks Landing project.

In February 2003 the Landmark Society's Preservation Issues Committee reviewed the Brooks Landing project and decided that the project would not have any significant impact on historic resources. At this committee meeting were an architectural historian, a landscape architect, several persons who have a particular concern with Rochester's horticultural heritage, and others interested in Rochester's historic resources. Thereafter, because of SHPO concern about the project, several committee members and I have attended meetings on the project and reviewed our position.

Our conclusion remains the same; the project will not have an adverse impact on the significant historic portions of Genesee Valley Park.

With this letter, I also wish to comment on how our conclusions can appear to be so diametrically different to the views expressed in the letter from SHPO on August 14th. Foremost, I believe our two views are shaped by having vastly different roles and perspectives. SHPO has a regulatory responsibility, which demands various levels of reviews and permissions for certain actions. SHPO is mandated to respond to projects that fall under its purview and must take into account state and federal regulations. Parts of SHPO's statement, such as trying to avoid the federal conversion process altogether, reflects the reality that this is a burdensome process. Further, SHPO also states that this issue could have been addressed in a more deliberate manner through earlier consultation. We know that SHPO is inundated with project reviews and our hope is that in the future the city will consult with SHPO in a timelier manner.

The Landmark Society has no expertise with state or federal regulations or processes, though in many cases we find that these processes are important protections for our historic resources.

Unlike SHPO, we are not obligated to be involved in any specific situation but as a local preservation organization, we cannot limit ourselves just to what comes before us in certain

Mr. Fashun Ku November 13, 2003 Page Two

circumstances. Our mission is to work to preserve and revitalize the historic resources of our region, whether or not they are being impacted by a specific project or have specific funding sources. In the Rochester region, we have a wealth of historic resources, some of which are impacted by state and federal actions. However, the vast majority of projects impacting historic resources occur through local action. Further, we must be concerned with deterioration, neglect, misguided maintenance, and other actions that threaten our region's resources. With this mandate, we find that, in most circumstances, it is best to work cooperatively with the owners of historic properties, be they individuals, businesses or public agencies, as their stewardship will determine the long-term future of these properties. For us to antagonize an owner or to oppose a private or a community project, we feel there must be a concrete threat to an historic resource.

Naturally, we also desire to work cooperatively with SHPO, given the valuable role they play in protecting our cultural resources and the support they often provide us on numerous issues.

Many Rochesterians value our Olmsted legacy, which SHPO references in their letter. In fact, we have had some terrible losses of that heritage. But I'd note that both the City of Rochester and Landmark Society have taken significant actions to save that heritage and, in separate actions, are undertaking legal actions to prevent to inappropriate expansion of the county-operated Seneca Park Zoo. Both of us have lawsuits that are under appeal.

I'd also note that for the Seneca Park Zoo expansion, only local funds are envisioned, undoubtedly to avoid SHPO review. In this situation, the Landmark Society, and, I presume the city also, would heartily welcome a SHPO role.

For the Landmark Society, our Seneca Park effort has required the allocation of significant monies, a huge commitment of staff time and a campaign to generate public support. Doing so shows we are willing to fight for our Olmsted heritage, in situations where we feel that this heritage is endangered.

But we do not consider the extreme edge of the Plymouth Avenue addition to Genesee Valley Park, not designed by Frederick Law Olmsted and perhaps not designed by anybody, to be an historic resource of any consequence. We understand SHPO's rationale stating that additions can become significant in their own right. However, Genesee Valley Park is a large park, it is divided by the river and the heart of the surviving Olmsted-designed area is on the river's east side. Another break is on the west side of Genesee Valley Park where Plymouth Avenue begins north of the four-lane Elmwood Avenue. There is inadequate pedestrian or visual connection with the original portions of the park. In my 20 years in Rochester, I never knew that this heavily traveled small stretch of Plymouth Avenue was officially a park road. At the edge of this Plymouth Avenue addition to the park, the Brooks Landing site will take less than 2 acres of Genesee Valley Park's 800 acres. From the Landmark Society's perspective, this amount of land on the end of this rather unimportant addition to the park is not significant.

Mr. Fashun Ku November 13, 2003 Page Three

If the Landmark Society had more resources than we have at present, we could do much more to work to preserve and revitalize Genesee Valley Park. Foremost, we would study the park in greater detail to identify the most intact elements of the Olmsted design, such as the Red Creek area. We'd try to form an Olmsted Friends group (which we did attempt to organize several years ago) and we'd hold meetings with park planners, the golf course manager, and maintenance staff to discuss issues impacting the park every day. We'd also try to develop plans to restore features designed by Olmsted and the Olmsted firm. We'd launch more aggressive efforts to educate the public about our Olmsted heritage. But even if we could develop and address a long and detailed list of the needs of the park, I'm quite sure that 'preservation' of this small amount of land for Brooks Landing would not be included. Indeed, for the Landmark Society, fighting for this one small piece of land would not be in the best interest of Genesee Valley Park or the historic preservation movement in our community.

The Landmark Society understands that the preservation movement evolves, but we are unfamiliar with the use of a view-shed issue within an urban context. The University of Rochester is in the fortunate position of having at least a mile of riverfront property, all within the city limits. Given the length of this riverfront, the mixed development on the west side of the river, and the relatively insignificant visual impact of this project on just a few acres of the land across from the university, we cannot understand the argument for an adverse impact on the University of Rochester as an historic resource.

I hope this letter explains the Landmark Society's position on the Brooks Avenue project. As residents of Rochester, we recognize that this is an important economic development endeavor for our city and the 19th Ward neighborhood. As preservationists, we do not see any impact on the historic resources it is our mission to protect. And as advocates for the historic preservation movement in this region, we are concerned that our movement may be tarred as obstructionists, should this project fail.

Our hope is that SHPO and the City of Rochester will now work together productively to resolve this situation to the satisfaction of all.

Sincerely,

Henry McCartney
Executive Director

cc: Richard Lord; Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation

City of Rochester Planning Commission — Hearing on Brooks Landing

Remarks on Behalf of the University of Rochester Robert Kraus, Associate Vice President for University Public Relations

February 24, 2003

We at the University of Rochester have watched, with great and continuing interest, the development of plans for the Brooks Landing project. The project can indeed be a significant change agent for the economic base of the 19th Ward. We have participated in discussions about the project over a long period of time, because it's important to the 19th Ward, Sector IV, and City of Rochester. We are glad to see it moving toward fruition.

The University has a continuing commitment to being the anchor tenant of the retail/office building. Further, the developer of the hotel has been in touch with various offices of the University to get a sense of the ongoing demand for rooms from University visitors. The project is not being done for the University, but the visitors that the University attracts are important to the project's viability. Our faculty, staff, and student population should also help to sustain the restaurant business. As important, we hope and expect that our faculty, staff, and student will be a market for the other shops and businesses expected to flourish in the hotel's environs.

Above all, our role has been to be supportive of a community-based project that would work to revitalize the 19th Ward. As you know, the Riverside Park on the University's side of the river was recently enhanced and we hope that this will be mirrored by these important proposed riverfront improvements on the west bank of the Genesee.

Thank you.

From: FrancesSG@aol.com

Sent: Monday, March 31, 2003 9:39 AM

To: STIDL@cityofrochester.gov

Cc: hmccartney@landmarksociety.org; tgrasso1@rochester.rr.com; CROWNS2@aol.com;

kipp60@netzero.net

Subject: Thank you

Larry,

Thank you for taking time to meet with me and Henry on Thursday and for inviting Rick Rynski to attend to discuss the Brooks Avenue hotel project and its impact on the National Register eligible Genesee Valley Canal/Pennsylvania Railroad, Rochester Branch and Genesee Valley Park. I now have a better perspective on the proposed project. As I said at the meeting, I do hope that the City of Rochester will retain public ownership of this historic corridor and maintain the linear perspective of the canal and railroad corridor through the project. Given the fact of the two existing sewer lines within the corridor, it would seem most feasible for the corridor to be used for this hotel project through an easement, rather than full fee title transfer of the property, thus retaining the integrity of the corridor for future generations. I hope also that any digging that is done will be conducted in a way that will not disturb what remains of the canal and that all involved will be alert to recovery of any archeological material. I am pleased that you will be interpreting the rich history of the area and hope that you will consult with the many knowledgeable canal historians that reside in Rochester. I look forward to hearing more about this project. Thank you again.

Fran Gotcsik

Businesses Working Together for Genesee Street

89 Genesee Street Rochester, NY 14611 April 8, 2003

Dear City Council:

Re: Support for Brooks Landing Project

Our reasons for requesting City Council's strong support:

- 1. Unprecedented amount of Public Input using the NBN Process
 - Design Charettes in 1998 and 2000
 - Visioning Workshops in 2001 and 2002
 - Public Information Meetings 2002 and 2003
- 2. Economic Development Driver for Southwest Rochester
 - Hotel & Restaurant bring 225 jobs for SW residents
 - · University of Rochester office tenants bring businesses traffic
 - Increased customer traffic supports needed local businesses
 - Coffee Shop, Bakery, Ice Cream, etc., etc.
 - Existing businesses benefit from 90% Exterior Improvement grants
 - New needed businesses are attracted e.g., Family Dollar
 - City-owned abandoned properties converted to new uses
 - ULREDC residential development, Mixed use, Parking
- 3. Enhanced Use of Public Parkland for residents & visitors
 - Public waterfront promenade
 - Easier resident access to Genesee Valley Park
 - Little League field area safer, more enjoyable

Sincerely,

John DeMott

Brooks Landing Revitalization Project

Public Informational Meeting February 6, 2003, 6:00pm

Summary of Public Comments/Questions

C/Q=Comment/Question R=Response

C/Q:

A resident wanted to know the total acreage and specific location of parkland to be used for the project.

R:

The City replied that approximately 1.5 acres of parkland and 1.5 acres of City owned open space is proposed to be used for the development project, and pointed to a map to show the locations of each.

C/Q:

A resident asked if the baseball fields would be removed, modified or improved for the project.

R:

The City replied that the project was approximately 800' north of the baseball fields, that they would not be removed or modified as a result of the project and that they were recently improved in the last two years.

C/Q:

Residents asked to what extent mature trees would be removed for the project.

R:

The City and Costich Engineers discussed issues of removing trees and pointed to a map to show the locations where existing mature trees were proposed to be removed.

C/Q:

Residents asked if/how the character of the neighborhood would be changed with the project.

R:

The City replied that the project would positively impact the neighborhood through enhanced pedestrian access, improved building conditions and uses, a new public park waterfront promenade and boat landing and increased vitality of the neighborhood

commercial center. FRA Engineers stated that vehicular traffic along Genesee St. would increase, however, that proposed improvements at nearby intersections would not only accommodate the new flow, but would also mitigate existing delays and provide safer pedestrian crossings.

C/Q:

A resident asked if the parkland to be utilized was a forever wild area and what impacts the drainage would have on the river.

R:

Bergmann Associates replied that project location is not a forever wild area. Costich Engineers replied that run-off from S. Plymouth Avenue currently drains directly into the river and that the proposed drainage system for the project would include storm water treatment.

C/Q:

A resident asked if the pedestrian bridge spanning the river would remain with the completion of the project.

R:

The City replied that the bridge is an integrated element of the proposed waterfront promenade, Genesee Riverway Trail and hotel and restaurant development. Sector 4 Neighborhood replied that the bridge was originally intended to link the neighborhood and the university, that this relationship is important to the neighborhood and that finally, a viable project is being proposed that would enable the bridge to fulfill its intended purpose.

C/Q:

A business owner asked if the same developer is still involved in the project and if there is a proposed completion date.

R:

The City replied that various developers were involved in the history of iterations proposed for the project. The City also stated that Flaum Management is interested in the development of Sub-Area II of the project and that Christenson Corporation is the hotel/restaurant developer who would like to be completed by spring 2004 for the U of R graduation.

C/Q:

A resident asked if there would be an increase in bus traffic.

R:

The City replied that they were not sure if the project would result in an increase in ridership or bus traffic but that it very well may with the new businesses opening.

C/Q:

A business owner asked what the plans are for the Sub-Area III.

R:

The City replied that Sub-Area III would consist of building renovations and an infill development site at two City owned vacant lots and pointed to a map to show the locations.

C/Q:

A resident asked how much money was going into the new public waterfront and if the promenade would link into the existing trail system.

R:

The City replied that it anticipates spending \$1.1 million for the proposed public promenade and that is an integral part of the City's Genesee Riverway Trail which connects to other regional trail systems.

C/Q:

A resident asked what type of hotel was being proposed and if the hotel would serve as housing for the U of R students.

R:

The City replied that the proposed hotel is a 104 room extended stay hotel, which consists of suites that have kitchenettes, allowing guests to stay for longer periods of time. The hotel would accommodate family of U of R students and local residents, medical researchers and visitors touring the Erie Canal. The City also stated that the hotel would not serve as student housing.

C/Q:

A resident asked how the proposed 2 story commercial/retail building in Sub-Area II would be oriented.

R

The City replied that the building would front with 0' setbacks on the intersection of Genesee St. and the re-aligned S. Plymouth Avenue. Parking would be located behind the building and would have vehicular access from both frontages.

C/Q:

A resident asked if the U of R purchased the property for Brooks Landing.

R:

The City replied that the U of R did not purchase the land for the project nor does the project proposal include a purchase by the U or R.

C/Q:

A resident asked how the neighborhood would benefit from the project.

R:

The City replied that in addition to physical enhancements already discussed, new jobs and commercial goods and services would come to the neighborhood as a result of the project. Sector 4 Neighborhood stated that the neighbors have waited a long time for a viable project to come to this area.

C/Q:

A resident asked how the project would impact existing utilities in the area.

R:

Costich Engineers replied that all utilities are being reviewed by the appropriate utility agencies to ensure sufficient neighborhood service with the proposed development.

C/Q:

A resident expressed a preference to have locally owned businesses come to the area instead of chain businesses. They expressed concern regarding the desirability of a proposed "Family Dollar" retail store for a development site to the north of this project.

R:

The City replied that locally owned businesses are preferred, but that it is very difficult to get certain desirable locally owned businesses to invest in a markets needing extensive revitalization until a viable anchor is identified. The City also stated that the positive effects of the Brooks Landing project would support the market for more desirable businesses to the north along Genesee St.

C/Q:

A resident asked why the hotel/restaurant site was laid out with parking between the hotel and Genesee St. instead of parking on the river side, and asked which side the hotel fronted.

R:

The City replied that the proposed site layout was the result of critical design factors including existing site constraints such as major utilities in the former railroad/canal bed, preserving viewsheds from Genesee St. to the river, the location of the public waterfront, and existing topography. Costich Engineers stated that the hotel fronts both the neighborhood with the main entrance as well as the river with a terrace and access to the public promenade.

C/Q:

A resident living on Grandview Terrace expressed driving difficulty while exiting out onto Genesee St. due to on-street parking on Genesee St and asked if there was anything that could be done to improve this.

R:

The City stated that they would look into the sight distance at the intersection and include improvements as part of the street work if/where possible.

C/Q:

A resident asked if the hotel/restaurant parking was for public use.

R:

The City replied that the parking lots are intended for the use of business patrons and employees. However, they realize that others could decide to utilize the parking lots as well.

C/Q:

A resident asked if Genesee St. would be widened between Elmwood Avenue and Brooks Avenue as part of the project.

R:

The City replied that Genesee St. would not exceed the design vehicle capacity, therefore widening of the entire street had not been considered.

C/Q:

A resident asked if the islands would be taken out at the Scottsville Road intersection.

R:

The City replied that the islands would remain at the intersection.

C/Q:

A resident asked if the building containing the existing City's Neighborhood Empowerment Team (NET) office would be removed and if so, where the new NET office would be located.

R:

The City replied that the one story building would be removed and that the NET office would be moved to a new location. The City is currently working to determine the new location.

C/Q:

A resident asked what the phrase "public gathering space" means.

R:

The City replied that these are areas where public pedestrian amenities such as landscaping & benches are located and that there are multiple public gathering areas within the proposed project and pointed to a map to show their locations.

C/Q:

A resident asked if there was an anticipated change in traffic volume north of Brooks Avenue on Genesee St.

R:

The City replied that that they do not anticipate a significant change in volumes north of Brooks Avenue.

C/Q:

A resident asked if long term on-street parking could be implemented given the existing one hour parking.

R:

The City replied that they do not anticipate that existing parking regulations would change.

C/Q:

A resident asked how traffic would be routed during construction.

R:

The City replied that traffic would be detoured during construction and pointed to a map to show various detours for various stages of construction.

C/Q:

A resident asked if pedestrian access across Genesee St. would be difficult with increased traffic volume.

R:

The City replied that the pedestrian crossing throughout the area would be greatly improved and updated with upgrade of crosswalks, signaling changes and countdown timers at intersections.

C/Q:

A resident asked if a center island could be added along Genesee St. for pedestrians having trouble crossing the street.

R:

The City replied that the new countdown timers and signal system would provide ample time for crossing and that crosswalks would be upgraded for pedestrian access and driver visibility.

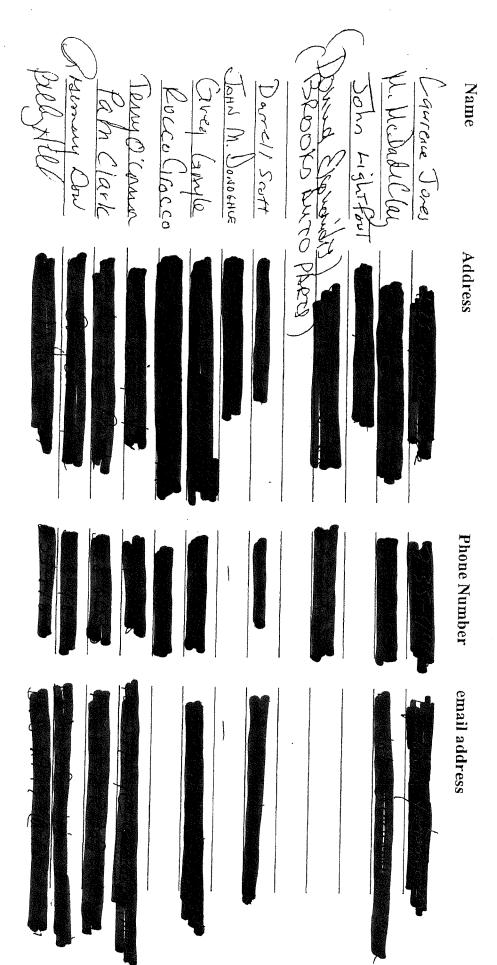
C/Q:

A resident asked if the project would increase public safety issues for residents living near the development and the remaining portion of S. Plymouth Avenue.

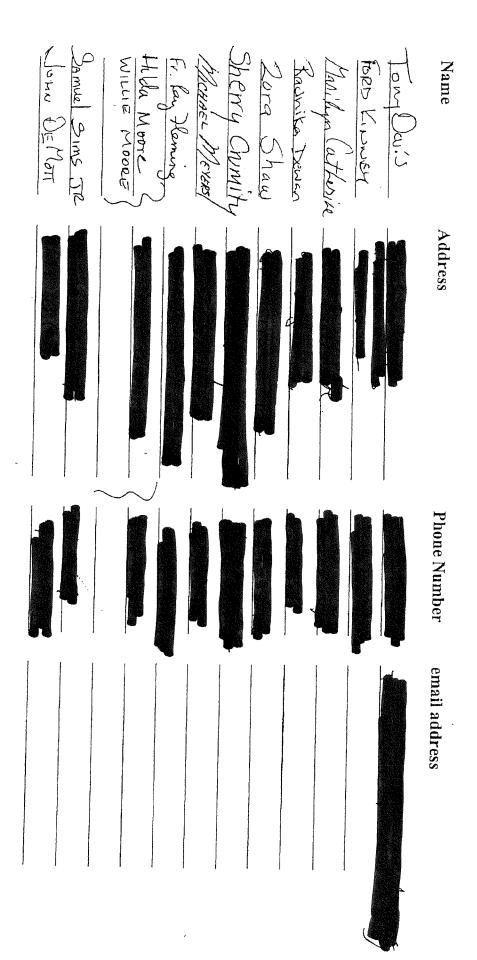
R:

The City replied that it would look into increased security measures for the entire project area. Sector 4 Neighborhood stated that the vitality of the area would increase and therefore, would reduce the amount of loitering and street crime that now exists.

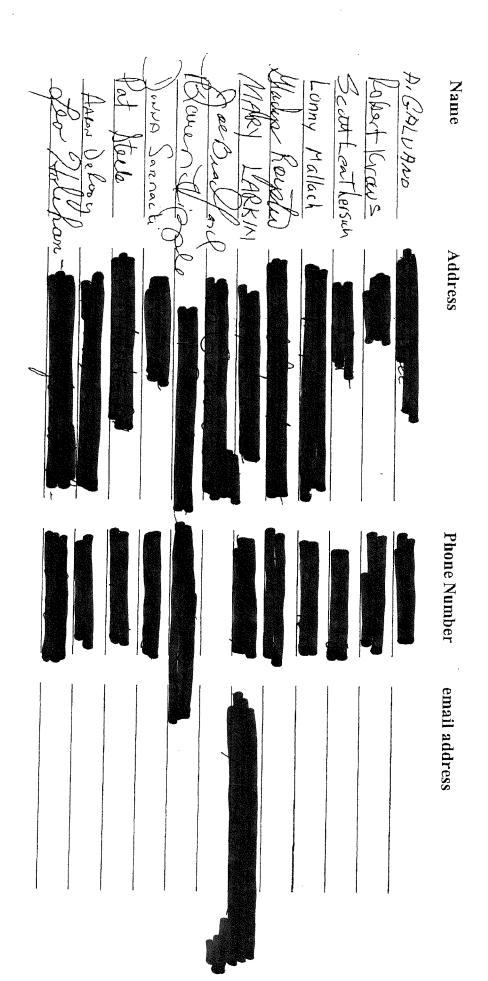
BROOKS LANDING DEVELOPMENT PROJECT February 6, 2003



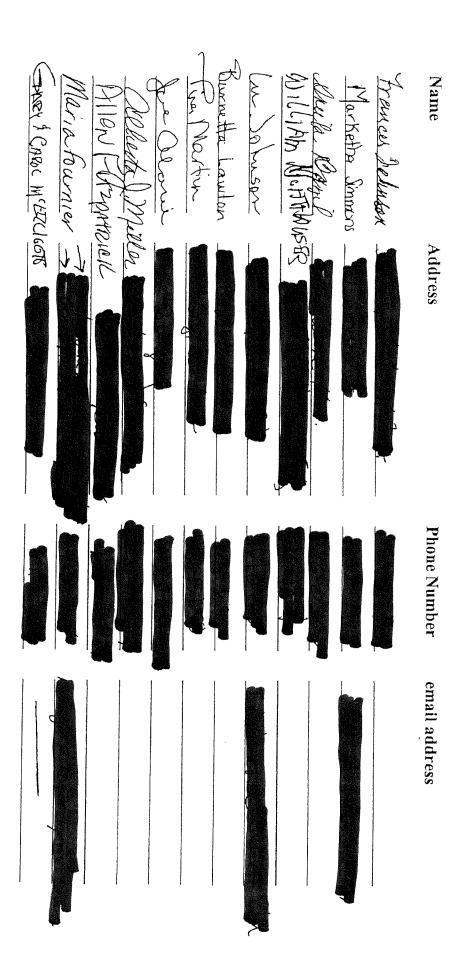
BROOKS LANDING DEVELOPMENT PROJECT February 6, 2003

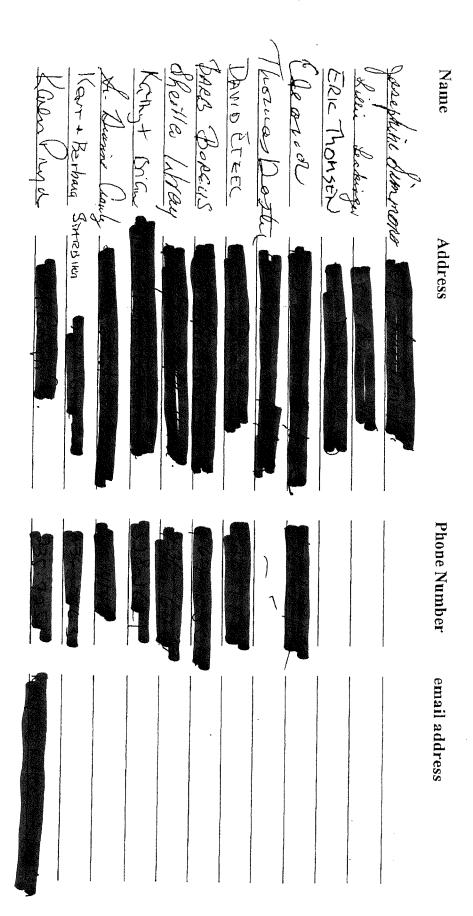


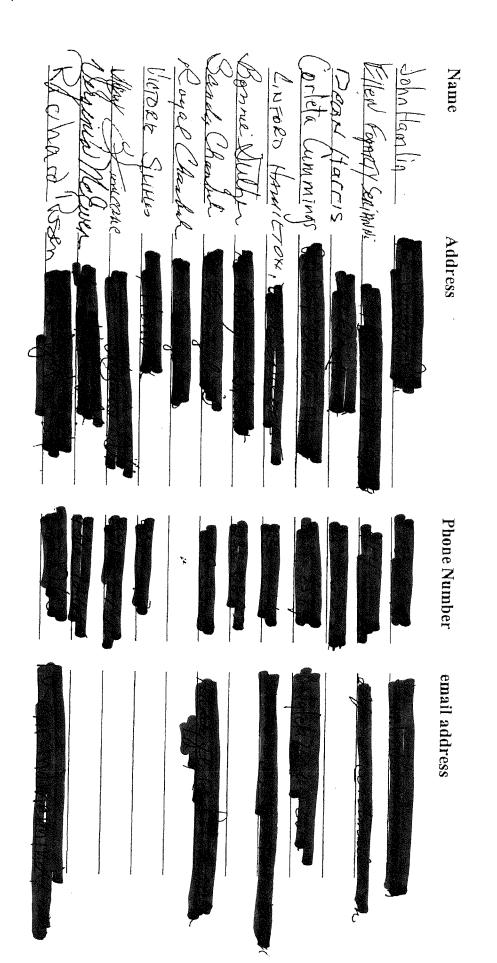
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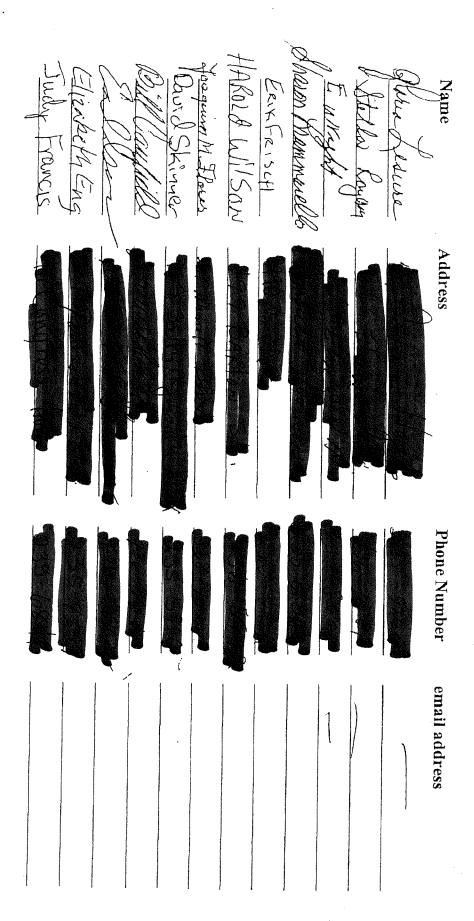


BROOKS LANDING DEVELOPMENT PROJECT February 6, 2003

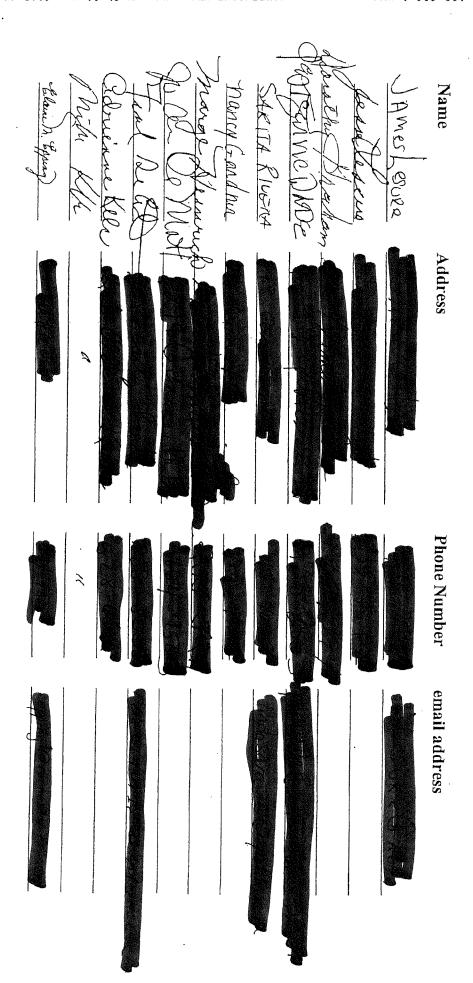




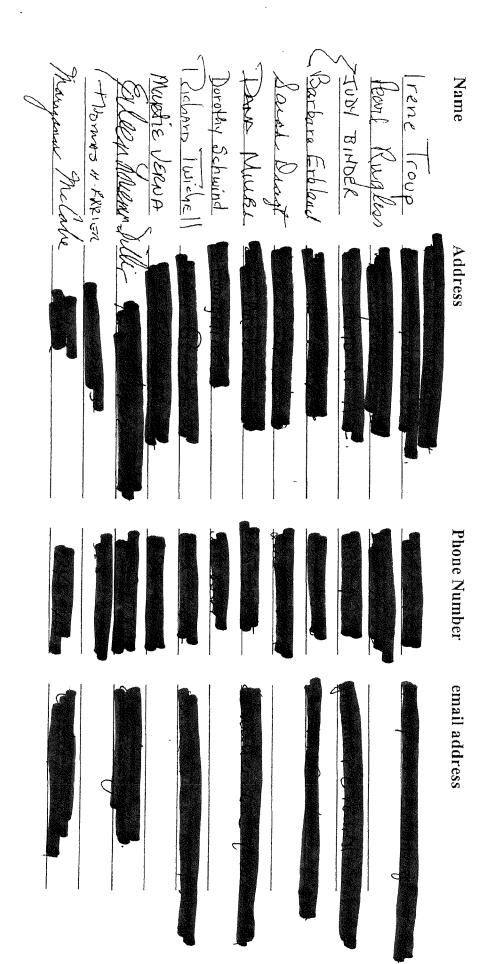




BROOKS LANDING DEVELOPMENT PROJECT February 6, 2003



GE



MINUTES BROOKS LANDING URBAN RENEWAL T-003-02-03/M-002-02-03 CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

Mr. Rick Rynski presented the application to the Planning Commission on February 24, 2003.

I am Rick Rynski, Senior Economic Development Specialist for the City's Economic Development Department, speaking on behalf of the Project Partners' for the Brooks Landing Urban Renewal Project.

With me tonight are representatives of Sector 4 Community, as well as some project consultants, Bergmann Associates: Jim Durfee, John Schirmer and Brian Burri and Costich Engineers:Paul Collucci.

I am here tonight to propose the zoning text and map amendments of existing C-2 and open space, the area of Brooks Avenue and Genesee Street to Brooks Landing Urban Renewal district.

I know everybody has a copy of the proposal. If I can draw your attention to the exhibits at the back, the exhibits 1, 2 and 3. This is the entire proposed Urban Renewal district for the project. As you can see, it is broken up into three subareas.

Subarea 1 consists of private development of hotel and restaurant site and public waterfront. Subarea 2 will be for a 25,000 sq. ft. office/retail and parking. Subarea 3 is broken up into various renovation and infill development sites. Specifically subarea 3A, the first 2 properties north of Brooks Avenue for renovation and demolition. And subarea 3B are city owned vacant lands for new mixed use and infill development.

That is a very brief description of the project. I can also take your attention to exhibit B of the plan. I am sure most of you are aware of the project. That had a long history and evolution. We are trying to revitalize an important and unique area within the City. Unique in that it is a neighborhood commercial area that is adjacent to Genesee River. As you can see, it is mostly City owned land that is vacant. That is a big factor in our proposal here.

I can take you to Exhibit C, Land Use map. We have three land uses within the proposed Urban Renewal district. In subarea 1, except for the land along the river, we are designating it as a Riverfront Commercial area. To the east of that is the open space land use area.

In subareas 2 and 3, we are proposing as neighborhood commercial area. The neighborhood commercial area is based on C-1 zoning, in the new Zoning Code, with the exceptions outlined in the renewal plan. The riverfront commercial land use is based on C-2 zoning. The open space proposed for the public promenade, boat landing will remain as open space in the current Zoning Code.

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I will be happy to take any questions.

Patrick: Explain what is going on with Plymouth Avenue.

Rynski: On the map to my left here indicates public improvement/street

modifications that are required to accommodate this new project. On the Brooks Avenue, we are going to realign the Brooks Avenue/Genesee Street intersection. At the southern end of the project, we are looking at linking S. Plymouth Avenue as it runs through the park into the project

site.

Patrick: In other words, S. Plymouth Avenue would not be a direct thru as it is

now, correct?

Rynski: Correct.

PERSONS IN FAVOR

Rosemary Dew: I live on Congress Avenue and I have lived in the 19th Ward for 18 1/2 years. I am also an employee of the University of Rochester.

I can also tell you that in the last 18 1/2 years, I have rented rooms in my home to graduate students, professors and research associates who visit U of R. There is a great need for short term and long term housing when these visitors come, mostly from foreign countries. They need a place to live on a temporary basis. They don't have a car. They are limited in their funding. They need to walk back and forth to the University. Unfortunately many people at the university always think, don't go to the 19th Ward, there is nothing to do, there is no place to go, there is no shopping, there is not anything.

Because I am on campus, I interact with undergraduates and graduates. One of the big things they say is that there is no good place to eat, there is no place to do any shopping right-in-the area. All-they will-have-to-do-is-walk across-the bridge and there we will be. The opportunities for growth in the 19th Ward would be positive with this Brooks Landing because you are going to have a lot of people coming from across the river. Even during summer when we don't have classes in session, there are also a lot of groups that come to the university, stay on campus. We have a lot of research going on at U of R. We have the potential of people coming over to shop. We have the potential of upgrading our neighborhood. I am in favor of this project. I'd like to see it come to fruition.

Adam McFadden (Support): I am Adam McFadden, a resident of 74 Marlborough Road, President of the 19th Ward Association, Treasurer of Sector 4 CDC, member of Business & Economic Development Committee of Common Council of Sector 4.

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I am in full support of this project. This project started 20 years ago, in 1983. Twenty years ago, I was playing little league baseball in that same park. No one would think at 12 that I would be up here giving this presentation.

In 1983, the Genesee South River Corridor Plan was approved. The plan called for by-pass on both sides of the river, 600 units of housing on west bank, pedestrian bridge connecting both sides and also commercial development on Brooks/Genesee. I remember it vividly because in 1984, there were talks about McDonald being out there. Because me and my friends would always ride our bikes on the Elmwood Avenue bridge up to Mt. Hope to McDonald's because that was the year they had the Olympics promotion going on and we would always win the Big Macs.

In 1991 the pedestrian bridge was constructed at Brooks Avenue. B & L gave the funds for the park on the east side. The rest of the project was not completed.

In 1994, the U of R and the city agreed each to contribute \$1.2 million to fund the development of the Brooks/Genesee project.

In 1995, Crista Corporation signs on as a developer. In 1996 Crista Corporation is unable to achieve 50% commitment to retail space. Did not get bank funding, leaves the project. Property options expire. In 1997, U of R graduate students complete marking plans for Brooks Landing. Also in 1997 Sector 4 CDC was formed.

To break away from the history, we were surprised by this as a community because many people may not know we are considered most racially and economically diverse neighborhood in the state. The highest concentration of PhD's and graduate professionals that are African American in the whole state are in our neighborhood. I am very surprised that they could not find someone to be interested in our neighborhood.

Here we are 2003, at the table. Bills have been put into place in the Senate asking for alienation of the parkland so that we can get this started. And overtime, we have heard from few people who have some concerns saying that they were not notified. But for 20 years, residents have met, specifically in 1999, 2000 and 2001. There were public forums open to the entire community at the Genesee Baptist Church and at St. Monica's where people had a chance to express their concerns. Another concern we had was that the university was forcing it on us. The University was not forcing it on us because it was not their ideas first. It came from the residents. We approached the University to become a stake holder. Another concern was that the University was going to make all the money from this. Well, this development is slated to provide about 225 jobs in the area where residents will have the opportunity to apply for.

One resident said that there was a rare bird living in a tree and that there will be a tree loss and that the bird will be extinct. Let me say that our community is an extinct community given the economic situation right now. Thank you.

T-003-02-03/M-002-02-03

Page 4

Hanif Abdul-Waitid: I live at 630 Melville Street. I am the Secretary for the Sector 4 CDC. The economic health of the southwest depends on this major development. For the last 20 years, stores have closed in the southwest and developers have shunned coming into the southwest to develop anything.

The hotel complex will bring outside dollars into the local economy. And other businesses in the area will benefit from the additional customer base we hope this project will generate.

Our vision is a thriving community of locally owned business and residents committed to enhancing the quality of life in Sector 4 by creating and maintaining vital vibrant commercial corridors.

This project is key for the development of southwest. We hope that this project will become a reality.

Jim Candella: A member of the Genesee Business Association. I am representing the Association. We support the application; this is our project. We have been participants in the NBN public meetings that have shaped the Brooks Landing project over the last several years. This includes the design charrette in 1999-2000 and Genesee Visioning Workshops in 2002.

Our economic survival depends on this project. This projects reverses decades of disinvestment in the southwest Rochester.

The Genesee Corridor Business Association strongly advocates the long awaited Brooks Landing Urban Renewal district.

Robert Krause: I am Associate Vice President for Public Relations at the University of Rochester.

We at the University have watched with great continuing interest development plans for the Brooks Landing Project. The project can indeed be a significant change agent for economic base for the 19th Ward. We have participated in the discussions about the project over a long period of time because it is important to the 19th Ward, the Sector 4 and the City of Rochester.

We are glad to see it moving towards fruition. The University has a continuing commitment to be the anchor/tenant for the retail office building. Further, the developer of the hotel has been in touch with various offices of the University to get a sense of the ongoing demand for rooms from university visitors.

MINUTES BROOKS LANDING URBAN RENEWAL T-003-02-03/M-002-02-03 Page 5

The project is not being done for the University. But visitors to the University are important to the project viability. Our faculty, staff and student population should help to sustain the restaurant business and other businesses.

Ellen Serianni: I live at 154 Brooks Avenue. The benefits we are going to get from the project outweighs lose of any of the existing uses. Some people are concerned about the increase in traffic but I would rather have auto traffic that the drug traffic that is going on right now. I have rented my properties to U of R students and they have been good tenants. I think our neighborhood will die without this project.

Victoria Simmons: I live at 164 Millbank Street. The reason why I bought my house is because I was told that this project was going to happen. That time I didn't have gray hair, now I just have to go to blonde just to keep things under control. I like this to happen during my life time. It is a win win situation for everybody.

Josanne Reaves: I reside at 750 Thurston Road. Over the past 10 years, the southwest community has worked to build a strong relationship between Sector 4 and U of R. U of R is the only college left with the Main Campus still left in Rochester. About 800 students and another 800 faculty and staff live in our neighborhood.

The Sector 4 CDC has been a driving force behind this project.

John Lightfoot: I am newly elected Sector 4 President. The process has been long. We need to move this project forward.

John Borek: I am resident of Melrose Street. I am also the past president of the 19th Ward Community Association. I am the President elect of the Sector 4 Common Council and I am board member of the CDC.

This is an extraordinary community, a community that measures its patient, devotion and commitment interms of decades. There were some previous comments about Carr Pharmacy which was at the corner of Brooks and Genesee. Carr Pharmacy was a business that existed about 30 years ago. That was the last time that we had appropriate face on our community. When I moved into the neighborhood 20 years ago, that building was already a convenience store in which the owner kept a gun posted at the cash register.

Not since days of Carr Pharmacy has the Brooks/Plymouth/Genesee area had a symbol to represent the richness of the community. The Brooks Avenue Corridor is the single most important entry to our neighborhood. It should define who we are.

We now have a corridor that identifies us with the word ghetto. In fact, it encourages the world beyond our boundaries to see us as a community of dilapidated buildings and

T-003-02-03/M-002-02-03

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abandoned lots. It is a source of immense frustration to thousands of families that there is no way to see the truth and beauty of our neighborhood that lies beyond this gateway. We now have hope.

Tony Davis: I am Sector 4 CDC staff person. The Brooks Landing project will be great addition to Sector 4 community. It will be anchor to spur the revitalization of the Brooks Urban Village in general.

There were no speakers in opposion.

Hearing closes

g:carolyn\justus\brooksla.min

GOOD NEWS for GENESEE ST.

Brought to you by the **Genesee Corridor Business Association**"Businesses Working Together For Genesee Street"

For information about the Genesee Corridor Business Association, call Dave Etzel, President, at 328-9746, or fax at 328-5912.

NEW PLANTERS DUE; FLOWER DAY MAY 31



35 more flower planters are on order for businesses north of Frost Ave. and along Scottsville Road. A community flower planting day is planned May 31.

With a total of 74 planters, many more hands will be needed this year! If you, your church, youth group, business, etc., want to help this year, please call Dave Etzel at 328-9746, or leave a message with Sector 4 Community Development at 328-5750.

City of Rochester Offers BUSINESS ASSISTANCE



The Economic Development Department's Business Assistance Program offers support to strengthen small businesses. It provides one-

on-one help to best use resources and improve decisions. Five modules are offered.

PC hardware, software, 50/50, \$2000

Accounting & Tax practices

Operations Evaluation

Advertising, 50/50, \$5,000 max.

Store layout, design, merchandising, 50/50, \$2000 max.

Start-up and established, retail and select consumer services are eligible. There is a \$50 fee for each module.

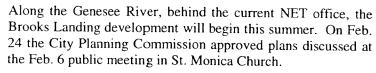
Call the City at 428-6042 for details, or call Sector 4 Community Development at 328-5750.

CALL 911 FOR STREET VICE

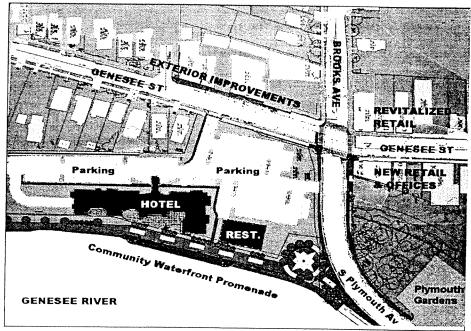
Street vice hurts our businesses and our community. Police are committed to help. *Call instantly* if dealers appear.

Brooks Landing Waterfront Plans Will Spark Genesee Street Revitalization

Mayor Johnson's recent "State of the City" address *confirmed* plans to revitalize the Genesee St. commercial area between Cottage St. and Congress Ave.







In the rebuilding of an "urban village", several companion projects are included.

- A community waterfront promenade linked to the corner of Genesee St.
- A 100-room hotel and restaurant to bring new customers to our businesses.
- A new retail and office building on the east side of Genesee at Brooks.
- Renovation and mixed-use projects on the west side of Genesee at Brooks.
- Added parking for businesses, plus new turn lanes and traffic signals.
- \$30,000 exterior improvement grants for existing area businesses.
- A national variety store at the corner of Seward St., replacing Super Duper.
- An attractive new **Urban League residential development** will replace 3 abandoned 700-block buildings to be razed shortly.

Brooks Landing, with its combination of private and public investment, has the potential to spark the commercial revitalization so long overdue for the businesses and residents along the Genesee corridor.

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RAYAM OSCAR JR & STELLA

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MANAGEMENT DE MOTT

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KAREN EMERSON
BEN EMERSON
ROCHESTER, NY 14619

DONNA ESSEGIAN

ROCHESTER, NY 14619

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CAL FAIRCHILD

AMY PIEPENBURG

ROCHESTER, NY 14619

FAITH TEMPLE
APOSTOLIC CHURCH
ROCHESTER, NY 14619

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JACQUELINE FARRELL
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JEAN DOUTHWRIGHT FASSE
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CLUMEENDALE STREET ROCHESTER, NY 14619

KIM CHING CHINESE RESTURANT

LATE VALUE OF RUMB ROCHESTER, NY 14619

FLOWER CITY SCHOOL

#54 SCHOOL

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BLEEDVENWOOD AUENCE

ROCHESTER, NY 14619

Ms. PANDORA BRINKLEY

ROCHESTER, NY 14619

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DEBORAH BURROWS

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ROCHESTER, NY 14619

COLUMN STATES

MEGIDDO CHURCH

OBS IN THE TOWN ROCHESTER, NY 14619

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(DE DESERVE STOFFE)

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HILDEGARDE BUSCH Walie Battle Gio

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OR ALTEREDICATE ROCHESTER, NY 14618

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WILLIEAN BANKS

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DEBORAH BEARDSLEE **ERIC VAN DUSEN**

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JORDON DANIEL

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PRINCIPAL #16 SCHOOL

GIL POST AVENUE

ROCHESTER, NY 14619

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BRANCH LIBRARY

ON PRINCIPALITY ROCHESTER, NY 14619

IVAN AYER

SECTION RESIDENCES ROCHESTER, NY 14619

GENESEE BAPTIST CHURCH

ROCHESTER, NY 14619

ROBERT BASILE JOAN BASILE

ROCHESTER, NY 14619

MS.SABRINA N. BELL COMMITTEE LEGIT

ROCHESTER, NY 14619

CINDY J. BIDWELL-GLAZE

ROCHESTER, NY 14619

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HARRIETT AUSTIN

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PRINCIPAL #37 SCHOOL GRANDE REPORT AND RESE

ROCHESTER, NY 14619

PAUL ARNOLD

EMHURS STREET ROCHESTER, NY 14619

SWEET LIFE BAKERY

ROCHESTER, NY 14619

MARIE BARKER

ROCHESTER, NY 14619

SHERI BATCHELDER

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REV. J. BRAD BENSON

DR. CARL M. JAHENGEN

TO ME ROOF STREET

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JUDY BINDER

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JOHN BOREK JACQUELINE LEVINE

CAN BE BUSINESSEE ROCHESTER, NY 14619 MARION SHARP SE MELLON ST

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MATTIERREE SHAW-ELLIOTT CONTRACTOR

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MARY B. SHOEMAKER

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ROCHESTER, NY 14612

PAUL ANASTASI **BUREAU OF RECREATION**

ROCHESTER, NY 14613

MAPLEWOOD

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

COMMUNITY SERVICES

NORHTWEST

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CENTER FOR DISPUTE

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CAPTAIN ROBERT DEWEY ROCHESTER POLICE DEPT.

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MAYOR'S OFFICE CITY HALL

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ROCHESTER, NY 14614

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ROCHESTER, NY 14611

LAWRENCE JONES
VERA VERSTEEG
ROCHESTER, NY 14611

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JAMES MADISON
SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE
ROCHESTER, NY 14611

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UNITY HEALTH SYSTEM
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GENESEE SECTION POLICE DEPT
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KATHY GROVE
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SWINBOURNE ROAD

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WILLIAM NICHTHAUSER

SKANDWEWS FRAGE

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P.08

PRINCIPAL #44 SCHOOL

OF CHILLAYENUE

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RACHEL ABLOW

ROCHESTER, NY 14611 **AENON**

BARTAN DHUNGH MAGENESEE STADE

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DAVID ARES ELIZABETH ARES

GEWELOOM STREET

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BELLE BARG LEE BARG

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DOROTHY CARROLL WILLIAM CARROLL

ROCHESTER, NY 14611 SHARON HUMBERT CLARK

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JOHN CLARKE **GOTTHER AVENCE**

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MARGARET DENHAM

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COS ELMINDOU AVENUE ROCHESTER, NY 14611

CHURCH OF DIVINE INSPIRATION WARRENON STREET

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ROCHESTER, NY 14611

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SE SANGMEN STREET ROCHESTER, NY 14611 JOYCE FLESCH

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JANET LAMB

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OF ROCHESTER
ROCHESTER, NY 14605

JACK SPULA CITY ROCHESTER, NY 14607

CORNHILL
NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION
ROCHESTER, NY 14608

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RICHARD ROBERTS
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PITTSFORD, NY 14534

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PRINCIPAL #29 SCHOOL

ROCHESTER, NY 14611





Community Development Corporation

February 18, 2004

Kevin Burns, Chief of Grants New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Agency Building 1, 16th Floor Empire State Plaza Albany, New York 12238

Dear Mr. Burns:

Thank you for your ongoing engagement in the Brooks Landing project. As you know, the community has waited a long time to be at this stage of development. We appreciate your scrutiny of the project because it matches are own over the last six years.

The City recently told us that a question was raised concerning the view from the intersection of Genesee and Brooks over to the Genesee River and the University of Rochester. This was perhaps the earliest and most widely talked about aspect of the project—the view. In fact, it was of more concern than the reduction of traffic on Plymouth. We addressed this early on at our first series of charrettes in 2000. The visual connection across the river to the University is of primary importance.

It is our understanding that an idea was discussed to move the development closer to Genesee Street. This configuration was never advocated for by any community or neighborhood group at any of the many, many meetings we have held. We, the community, have instinctively realized that the project must be connected to the waterfront. If it is connected to an urban street, it will overwhelm the community and detach it from its original intention --to feature our greatest asset, the Genesee River. In this way, Brooks Landing will introduce the community to both the University and Monroe County populations. The openness leading to Brooks Landing is then, not only visual planning, but social planning as well.

We also understand that a suggestion has been made of reversing the placement of the hotel and restaurant buildings. Along identical lines, this would interrupt the view to the river and isolate the community from Brooks Landing. I can speak with the authority of not only the Community Development Corporation, but as president elect of the Common Council of all Sector 4 neighborhood associations and as past president of the largest neighborhood association, the 19th Ward Community Association, that this is a configuration the community does not want. We are quite happy with the current design plans. We feel that it enhances our community and gives us access to and appreciation of a wonderful river view.

Again, we thank you for your attention to the details of Brooks Landing. Hundreds of residents of this area have also paid attention to these details and what I write has the value of years of discussion and consensus building.

John Borek

Sincerely



April 14, 2004

Dear Mr. Burns:

As director of the economic development arm of Sector 4 and as president elect of the Sector's Common Council comprised of its neighborhood associations, I wish to address several issues regarding the Brooks Landing/Brooks Urban Village project.

The community clearly understands that the intersection improvements will not result in added congestion. Yes, we understand that volumes will be higher but the signaling will mitigate these increases. In fact, the project would help relieve existing congestion resulting from inadequate signals currently in use. The project would also help improve pedestrian safety at crossings through an improved use of signaling and crosswalks. The City has explained this to the residents in Sector 4 as well as the residents most affected by the project through a series of community meetings. We, the community, believe all such residents have been contacted and have had their questions answered to their satisfaction.

Additionally, we understand that the volume of additional traffic on Genesee Street is not sufficient to yield an audible decibel level and that the added traffic volume of 40-60% would not result in any audible change. The City, through the public environmental review process, has diligently informed the community of these details in very comprehensive, yet understandable, presentations for laymen.

As you know, the community of Sector 4 and its 37,000 residents have been advocating for this project for the last four years. We want to make it clear that the Sector 4 community has been thoroughly engaged by the City of Rochester in the planning process, the residents have been exceedingly well informed. We hope the project will now receive its final approvals.

Sincerely,

John Borek, Director